



## **Health Disparities Fact Sheet**

### **General**

- On average, African Americans and American Indians/Alaska Natives have higher overall rates of death than any other racial or ethnic group.
- American Indians/Alaska Natives, African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to report poor health.

### **Breast and Cervical Cancer**

- Although deaths caused by breast cancer have decreased among white women since the 1980s, in 2001 African American women had a 34 percent higher rate of death from breast cancer than white women.
- In addition women of racial and ethnic minorities are less likely to receive Pap tests, and thus have higher rates of cervical cancer.

### **Cardiovascular Disease**

- African Americans have the highest rate of high blood pressure of all groups and tend to develop it younger than others.
- Counties in rural Appalachia have the second highest death rate in the nation from heart disease. Nearly 44 percent of these residents have never had a serum cholesterol check.

### **Diabetes**

- Among adults aged 20 or older, African Americans are twice as likely as whites to have diabetes, and American Indians and Alaskan Natives are 2.6 times more likely to have diabetes. Hispanics are 1.9 times more likely to have diabetes.
- African Americans and American Indians have higher rates of diabetes-related complications such as kidney disease and amputations.

### **HIV/AIDS**

- HIV infection is the fifth leading cause of death for people who are 25-44 years old in the United States, and is the leading cause of death for African American men in the same age group.
- Although African American and Hispanic persons represent about one-quarter of the country's population, more than half of new AIDS cases reported to CDC are among these populations.
- Among children, the disparities are even more dramatic, with African American and Hispanic children representing more than 80 percent of pediatric AIDS cases in 2000.

### **Infant Mortality**

- Infant mortality rates which are one of the most sensitive indicators of health and well-being of a population, are significantly higher in African American and American Indian/Alaska Native populations.
- Infant mortality among African Americans in 2000 occurred at a rate of 14.1 deaths per 1,000 live births, more than twice the national average.
- The leading causes of infant death include congenital abnormalities, pre-term/low birth weight, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), problems related to complications of pregnancy, and respiratory distress syndrome. SIDS deaths among American Indian and Alaskan Natives are 2.3 times the rate for non-Hispanic white mothers.

### **Obesity**

- African Americans (66 percent) and Hispanic adults (62 percent) are twice as likely to be overweight than Asian/Pacific Islanders (32 percent). Slightly more than half of white non-Hispanic adults are considered overweight.
- Counties in rural Appalachia have the ninth highest rate of obesity.
- Among African American Americans, the proportion of women who are obese is 80 percent higher than the proportion of men who are obese. This gender difference is also seen among Hispanic women and men, but the percentage of white, non-Hispanic women and men who are obese is about the same.

### **Vaccines**

- In 2001, Hispanics and African Americans aged 65 or older were less likely to receive either influenza or pneumococcal vaccinations.